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LETTER DATED 9 JUNE 1995 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the report that I presented to the Security Council on 30 May 1995 concerning the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and options for its future (S/1995/444).

On 7 June 1995, a delegation consisting of civilian and military officials from France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland visited United Nations Headquarters in New York to convey a proposal by the Governments of those countries to provide military reinforcements for UNPROFOR in order to reduce the vulnerability of its personnel and to enhance its capacity to carry out its existing mandate. An agreed summary of the proposal is annexed to the present letter.

If the Security Council decides to accept this proposal it will be necessary for it to authorize an increase in the ceiling for UNPROFOR's strength.

Taking into account all relevant Security Council resolutions, the overall authorized strength of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Force (UNCRO), the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) and UNPROFOR amounted on 1 June 1995 to 44,870 all ranks. The actual current strength of those three forces and of the support elements assigned to United Nations Peace Forces headquarters (UNPF-HQ) amounted on 1 June to only some 40,000 all ranks. However, I have already agreed to the addition of a number of support elements and reinforcements proposed by other troop-contributing Governments to enhance the security of existing units in UNPROFOR. It would thus not be possible to accommodate any of the additional troops proposed by France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom within the current ceiling.

The troops proposed by those countries to provide UNPF/UNPROFOR with a rapid reaction capability amount to about 15,000, of whom 2,500 are already in theatre. In order therefore to incorporate these additional troops within UNPF/UNPROFOR, the Council would need to increase the authorized troop levels by 12,500. This figure includes the 4,000 troops in the French stand-by brigade but these would not be deployed unless and until their presence in the theatre became necessary.

The proposed reinforcement of UNPROFOR would thus bring the total authorized strength of United Nations Peace Forces in the former Yugoslavia to 57,370 all ranks, made up as follows:

UNPF-HQ .....)	
Theatre support elements .....)	43 530
UNPROFOR .....)	
UNCRO	8 750
UNPREDEP	1 090
Stand-by Force in France	4 000

The proposal put forward by France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom would address several aspects of the predicament in which UNPROFOR currently finds itself. It would in particular provide the Commander of UNPROFOR with well-armed and mobile forces with which to respond promptly to threats to United Nations personnel. It would thus reduce the risk that increasing casualties and harassment might cause the troop-contributing Governments and the Security Council to consider withdrawal. But, as the Council has recognized, UNPROFOR's ability to carry out the tasks given to it by the Council depends to a very large extent on the readiness of the parties to cooperate with it. This would remain the case. In this connection, the three Governments have made it clear that their intention is that the reinforced UNPROFOR would continue to be a peace-keeping mission.

The proposed reinforcements would not alter the fact that UNPROFOR cannot by itself end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its role is to create conditions in which progress can be made towards a peaceful settlement, to help implement agreements that are reached and to support efforts to relieve the human suffering created by the war. It is essential, therefore, as is recognized by the three Governments, that the reinforcement of UNPROFOR should be accompanied by a determined effort to revive the peace process. In particular, it remains my view, as stated in paragraph 67 of my report of 30 May 1995, that decisions by the Council on the future of UNPROFOR should be accompanied by a significant new political initiative, possibly in a new format.

In considering whether to recommend to the Security Council that it accept the proposed reinforcement of UNPROFOR, notwithstanding the substantial costs and risks involved, I have had in mind the factors mentioned in the closing paragraphs of my report of 30 May. Firstly, there is the humanitarian imperative. Delivery of relief supplies has for nearly three years been the main focus of United Nations efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a very great deal has been achieved. Secondly, there is the paramount need, repeatedly emphasized by the Council, to ensure the security of United Nations personnel who find themselves, I hope only temporarily, in a hostile environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time there is, thirdly, the need to protect the credibility of the Organization and avoid giving it tasks it cannot do or raising expectations that it cannot fulfil.

On balance, and after careful reflection, I believe that the proposed reinforcement of UNPROFOR will enhance the Force's ability to continue its humanitarian efforts, with less danger to its personnel than at present, and it is on this basis that I recommend that the Security Council accept the proposal

put forward by France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. I will shortly transmit to the Council preliminary estimates of the cost of implementing the proposal.

I should be grateful if you would bring these matters to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

Annex

Proposed rapid reaction force for the United Nations Protection Force

Summary of a proposal by France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The following summarizes the principal points that emerged from discussions conducted at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 7 June 1995 on a proposed rapid reaction force (RRF) to be placed at the disposal of the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would provide the following augmentation to the military capabilities of UNPF and UNPROFOR:

(a) A multinational brigade consisting of two battalion groups, one to be provided by the Government of France with an approximate strength of 2,000 and one to be based upon the current UNPROFOR Reserve, with a strength of 2,500, which will consist of a British battalion group, including the recently arrived artillery, aviation and engineer elements from the United Kingdom, as well as a mortar company of marines, including a mortar-locating radar group, provided by the Netherlands. The brigade total will be in the region of 4,500, of whom some 2,500 are already in theatre;

(b) A British airmobile brigade, consisting of two infantry battalions, two aviation regiments, engineers, artillery elements and the necessary logistic support, including 800 temporary personnel, which would produce a total of approximately 6,300;

(c) An additional French brigade, amounting to about 4,000 troops, would be placed on stand-by in France should further reinforcement prove necessary.

Their missions could include: emergency actions/responses to assist isolated or threatened United Nations units; helping redeployment of elements of UNPROFOR; and facilitating freedom of movement where necessary.

The delegations of the three Governments stated that:

(a) The RRF would be an integral part of the existing United Nations peace-keeping operation (UNPF/UNPROFOR);

(b) It would therefore require a Security Council resolution expanding the authorized levels of the Force, and would be financed through normal United Nations peace-keeping assessments;

(c) The RRF would be under the existing United Nations chain of command; it would operate under the operational control of the United Nations military commanders in the theatre, who would continue to be under the overall direction of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative;

(d) The RRF would act in support of UNPROFOR, functioning within its existing mandate;

(e) The RRF would be available to United Nations military commanders for the defence of United Nations personnel; the tasks assigned to it would be determined by the United Nations commanders on the ground;

(f) The RRF would operate under national uniform, under the United Nations flag and insignia but without blue helmets and without painting its vehicles white. It would operate under existing United Nations rules of engagement;

(g) The purposes of the RRF would be to give the commander a capacity between "strong protest and air strikes"; it would increase tactical operational flexibility and would be intended to have a deterrent effect but it would not change the United Nations role to peace-enforcement; the status of UNPROFOR and its impartiality would be unaffected;

(h) All forces could be deployed within 30 days of the necessary Security Council and host country approvals;

(i) The three Governments recognized that the RRF was not a substitute for an energized peace process working towards an overall settlement.